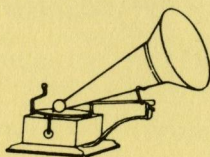


Hillandale

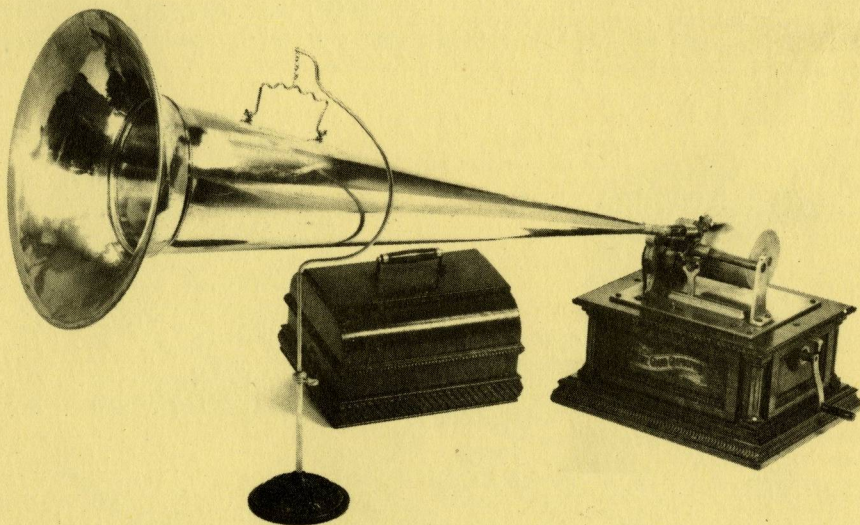


Journal of the
City of London
Phonograph and
Gramophone Society

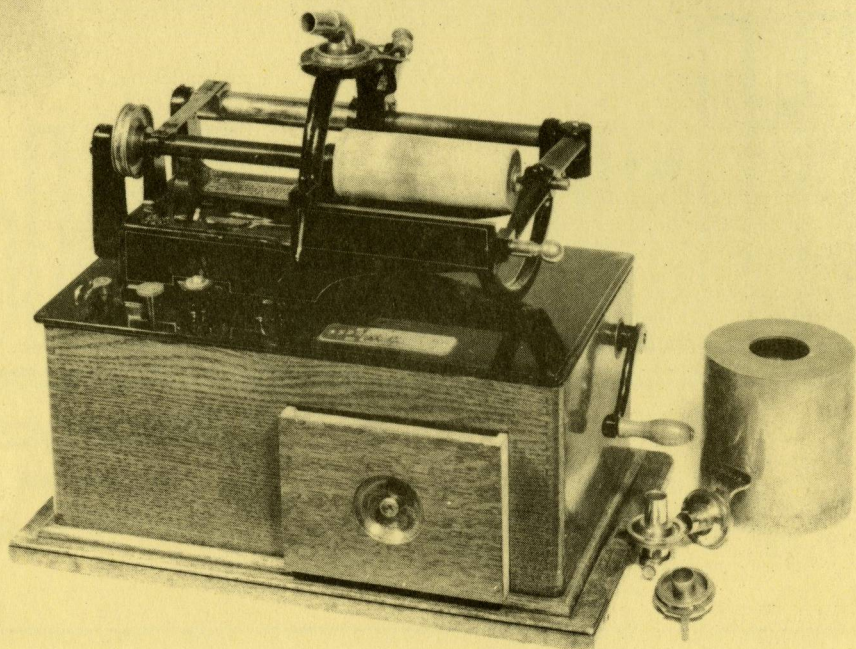
THE HILLANDALE NEWS

JUNE 1984. No 138.

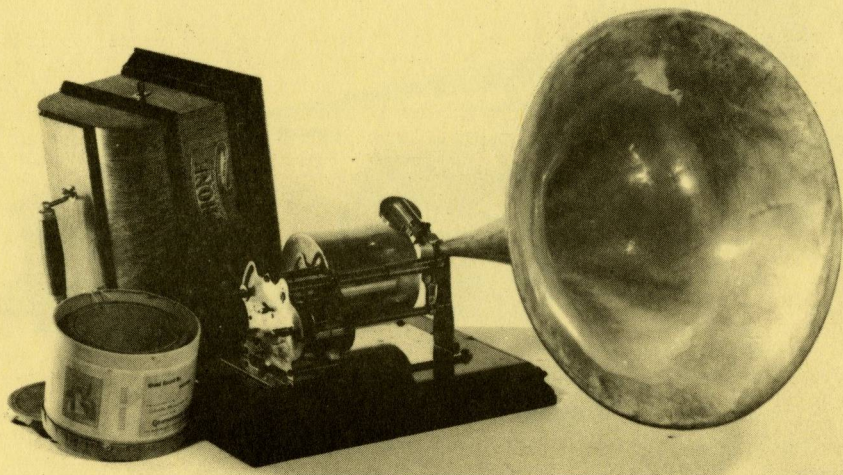
ISSN-0018-1846



Home Grand Graphophone, Type AD, with standard and 'Grand' size mandrels
(Christie's South Kensington photo.)



Above: Edison Spring Motor Concert phonograph with Edison-Bell 'duplex' type conversion. Below: Type AB Graphophone with choice of mandrels. (CSK photos)



Concert or Grand

by J.N.Carreck.

In the late 1890's wax cylinder records only gave quiet reproduction, of very limited quality in general, requiring the use of listening tubes rather than horns which produced poor results, owing to insensitive recording equipment which could only respond to a small part of the tonal range of music and speech.

It appears that about 1897 Thomas H. Macdonald, the factory manager of the Columbia Phonograph Company General of Bridgeport, Connecticut, was using cylinders of much greater diameter than the standard 2 inches to record at higher sound levels with enhanced clarity owing to their increased surface speed. Five-inch diameter cylinders were placed on the market with a phonograph called the Graphophone Grand, fitted with a $4\frac{1}{4}$ -inch mandrel, by his company in December 1898, in response to public demand for louder reproduction. This new record was patented in Great Britain on December 12th 1898. Edison had begun a similar course much earlier, having filed a patent application for this size of cylinder on December 3rd. 1890, granted on September 13th 1898, followed by another issued on October 18th of that year. His National Phonograph Company, of Orange, New Jersey, introduced a Concert Phonograph to the American market also in December 1898. From this time the same recordings were available to the public on both the large and the standard sized cylinders, but the former were sold at \$1 and the latter at only 50¢. One had to buy one of the very expensive new machines to play the large records. The Graphophone Grand at first cost \$150 and the Edison Concert Phonograph sold for \$125.

In Britain the Edison-Bell Consolidated Phonograph Company Ltd. (by then merged with James Hough's Edisionia Ltd.) sold 5-inch cylinders called Grand Concert at 6/- each from 1899. (Standard records were 2/-). E-B sold both the Edison Concert and the Graphophone Grand machines, and in 1902-3 also sold an 'Edison New Duplex' at £15, compared with £25 for the Edison Concert (though the latter dropped to 15gns. in 1903-4). The New Duplex possessed both standard and concert mandrels, and the company also sold a small duplex machine called the Edison-Bell Victor Concert Phonograph in 1902-3; this was of Graphophone (floating reproducer) type, probably imported from the continent.

In France during 1900-5 Pathe Freres of Paris made machines based on Columbia Graphophones designed to play their own 13-centimetre cylinders (called Stentor in reference to the powerful sound produced, but termed Grand Concert in Britain), and others of that diameter but 21 cm. long, known as Celeste. These played with equal volume for four to five minutes. The company also made 9cm. cylinders, of normal length, from 1902; these were called Intermediare or, in Britain, Intermediate Salon. (The French name for standard 4.5cm. cylinders was courante.) From the turn of the century Pathe master recordings were made on very large cylinders, then transferred to the four sizes of commercial record by means of a pantograph. This technique continued in use for Pathe discs until 1925.

In 1901 a Parisian clock-maker, Henri Lioret, produced wax cylinders of 13cm. diameter, and a phonograph to play them based on the Edison Concert, called L'Eclatant (meaning loud or brilliant), as well as other cylinders of 16cm. diameter and 20cm. length. There was a machine of Graphophone type called L'Ideal, to play these cylinders which were of four-minute duration.

From the middle 1890's a former Italian Army officer, Gianni Bettini, sold wax cylinders, mainly of Grand Opera excerpts by eminent singers, at first in New York and

later in Paris. In 1900 he first advertised Bettini Grand Concert Records. In the period 1901 - 1907 his Paris company, La Societe des Micro-Phonographes Bettini, manufactured phonographs including two models, L'Aiglon (The Eagle) and Le Tandem, to play these large cylinders.

Large mandrel phonographs were also sold in Germany, but to a lesser extent as the public there had developed a preference for disc talking machines. In the United States the Lambert Company of Chicago manufactured concert-sized cylinders of celluloid, much more durable than the wax records of other companies.

These large cylinders produced clear, forward sound enabling large horns to be used successfully, but were cumbersome, fragile and expensive. Due to the appearance of Edison and Columbia cylinders of standard size moulded in hard wax, in 1902, giving equally good sound at adequate volume through suitable horns, sales of concert cylinders fell considerably from then on, and conversion kits were sold to enable the large mandrel machines to play standard records. These attachments provided successively for Edison Gold Moulded, Amberol and even Blue Amberol cylinders as late as 1913.

Edison-Bell and Edisonia sold their Grand Concert records until 1909, and Edison marketed Concert cylinders until 1908. Like the other makes of large cylinders they did not sell well and are now seldom found, although Pathe Intermediaire records are fairly common.

In 1958 the writer was very fortunate in buying from an elderly man in Highgate an Edison Concert phonograph, Model A, with a pencilled date inside the lid 14.3.00. The serial number stamped on the top plate is C353. There is also the Edison-Bell Consolidated licence plaque normally found on Edison machines sold in the U.K. around 1898-1902 and the Edison SPRING MOTOR FOR PHONOGRAPH plate. On the wooden cover is a brass plate inscribed "Presented to the Willesden Presbyterian Church by F.G. Shrimpton Oct 1906. F.G. Shrimpton was very probably the first owner. In the 1920's it was bought for 5/- from the Metropolitan Cattle Market in Islington by the late Mr. Plowman, who sold it to the writer after he had already disposed of the horn and stand.

The case and lid of this particular example are of curiously inferior wood, quite unlike that of other Edison machines. The wood used for the lid was cut through a knot, but the cabinet maker replaced the latter with a rectangular panel, which eventually began to separate from the surrounding wood. In another place there is an inactive wood-worm boring, apparently made before the wood entered the factory. Presumably the cabinet was made in London by or for Edison Bell. Although the cabinet is dated March 1900, the machine itself was probably made during 1899.

With it came nine Edison-Bell and Edisonia Grand Concert cylinders in early boxes dating from 1899 to 1900 or 1901. Later the writer bought more recent examples from our late member, Mr. Maurice Lee of Colchester, who had received them from an elderly doctor at Bury St. Edmunds. Finally the writer was given an Edison Concert record and a Graphophone Grand cylinder by other members.

Most of these records are in very good condition, but a few are unplayable and one is channelled by a clumsy attempt to shave it by someone long ago. The general level of reproduction is very good. The Edison-Bell cylinders are either in dark green cartons labelled 'Concert Record' or in brown Pathe cartons, the Pathe labels covered with Edison-Bell & Edisonia labels marked 'Grand Concert Record'.

The high cost and cumbersome nature of these machines, together with the fragility and difficulty of storing the records, led to poor sales. As a result their manufacture ceased in 1908. They were particularly advertised for use out of doors and in large halls rather than in ordinary houses. In 1903 the Edison-Bell company even presented one, with forty-eight cylinders (not remarkable for cultural subject matter) to King Edward VII for use on his yacht Victoria. Coin-slot models were available for use in amusement arcades and fairgrounds.

Like the equivalent standard size records, these cylinders have no information marked on them except the late issues, which are inscribed "Edison Bell Record Trade Mark" on the thicker rim, but all are announced with the title, name of the performer and nearly always the company's name. Until the summer of 1901 each was announced as "London Record" as were James Hough's former London Phonograph Company records, but from then on this was replaced by "Edison Bell Record". Information was also given on the boxes and originally on a loose paper slip placed inside each. These slips (one of which survives in the present collection) also listed other selections by the same performer. The Edison and Columbia large cylinders were at first assigned a special group of catalogue numbers, but later one merely had to insert a letter 'C' or 'G' before that of an item in the standard catalogue to obtain a Concert or Grand record respectively.

All the large cylinders in the collection are of medium brown wax and play at various speeds from 100 to 140 r.p.m., thus giving about two-and-a-half minutes' entertainment.

Such large soft wax records were never made by a moulding process as the blanks were recorded upon individually by a pantograph from a master cylinder record. The earlier E.B. & Edsonia examples are, however, labelled "'Original' or 'Master' Concert Record. This record is guaranteed to be the direct product of the artist or band whose name it bears, and is not a mechanical reproduction." Evidently those were made by recording simultaneously on from five to ten phonographs grouped round the performer to produce as many copies, but mechanical duplication had been developed in the Edison laboratories by the late 1890's and must have been available to Edison-Bell in London at the turn of the century through its patent rights. Possibly limited sales made duplication of these large cylinders unnecessary at first.

This small collection represents a fair sample of the favourite subject matter for entertainment in affluent houses and in church halls at the turn of the century, and such recordings are to be regarded as historically valuable documents of the end of Queen Victoria's reign and the beginning of King Edward the Seventh's.

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Carter, S. Catalogue of the First Series (Brown Wax) Edison-Bell two-minute Cylinder Phonograph Records
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OVERLEAF: a German advertisement of 1901 showing, inter alia, a coin-operated phonograph for Concert size cylinders.

Allgemeine Phonographen-Gesellschaft m.b.H., Crefeld.

Grösste deutsche Phonographen- und Walzen-Fabrik!

Telegramm-Adresse: „Phonograph.“

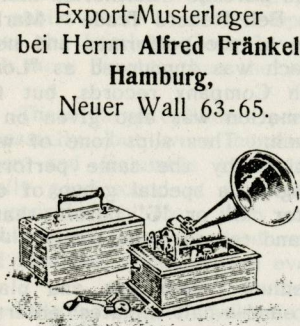
Telephon-Nummer 851.

Filialen: BERLIN S., Ritterstrasse 75, Telephon-Amt I, No. 1754.

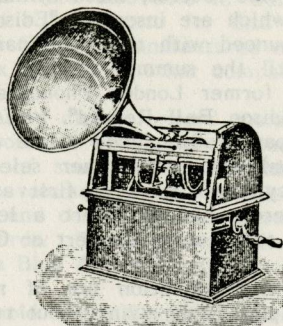
LONDON E.C., 9 and 10 Jewry Street.

Export-Musterlager
bei Herrn Alfred Fränkel,
Hamburg,
Neuer Wall 63-65.

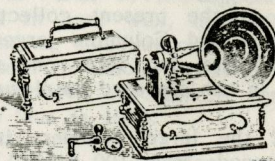
Vertreter
in allen grösseren
Städten.



Tip-Top B II.



Herold D.



Tip-Top C.

Wir fabriziren nach Patenten und Gebrauchsmustern (über 30):

I. Für kleine Walzen:

		zu Mk.	12,00	brutto
1.	Tip-Top A nur für Wiedergabe			
2.	„ „ B in gusseisernem Kasten für Aufnahme und Wiedergabe		25,00	
3.	„ „ b II. mit neuem Membranarm und hübschem polirtem Eichengehäuse		35,00	
4.	derselbe Apparat vernickelt		40,00	
5.	Tip-Top C mit verziertem und polirtem Eichengehäuse		50,00	
6.	derselbe Apparat mit grösserem Uhrwerk und grösseren Dimensionen		75,00	
7.	Mercurius mit bewährter Handabschleifvorrichtung		125,00	

II. Für Konzert-Walzen:

1.	Herold C		125,00	
2.	„ „ A mit bewährter Handabschleifvorrichtung		350,00	
3.	„ „ C II mit auswechselbarem Conus in einfacher Ausführung u. einf. Gehäuse		110,00	
4.	derselbe Apparat vernickelt mit grösserem Uhrwerk u. verziertem u. polir. Gehäuse		160,00	
5.	Herold X mit auswechselbarem Conus ohne Spindelführung		50,00	

III. Phonographen-Automaten a) für kleine Walzen:

1.	Tip-Top D ohne Unterschrank		75,00	
2.	„ „ D mit selbstthätigem Rücktransport und neuem Münzprüfer		105,00	
3.	Sirene mit Elektromotor		450,00	
4.	„ „ mit Uhrwerkmotor		200,00	

b) für Konzert-Walzen:

1.	Herold D ohne Unterschrank		200,00	
2.	„ „ D mit Unterschrank		250,00	
3.	beide Maschinen mit selbstthätigem Rücktransport und neuem Münzprüfer mehr je		30,00	
4.	Herold B mit Elektromotor		600,00	
5.	„ „ B mit Uhrwerkmotor		450,00	

Beste und billigste Konzert-Automaten!

Für Grossisten und Händler ausserdem Fabrikation verschiedener Maschinen billigst nach Wunsch mit oder ohne Gehäuse.

Ausserdem liefern wir: Duplikat- u. Abschleifmaschinen in allen Preislagen, mit Uhrwerk- od. Elektromotor. Ferner alle Zubehörfteile, wie: Membranen, Gläser, Aufnahme- und Wiedergabesteine, Abschleifmesser, Trichter aller Art, Einzelteile zu Maschinen, Abschleiftinctur etc.

~~~~~ Vollendete Maschinen, keine minderwertigen Nachahmungen! ~~~~~

Unsere Walzengliesserei ist ganz bedeutend vergrössert, sodass wir kleine und grosse Blanks, fertige Walzenmasse aus neuem concurrenzlosen Material bei Quantitäten zu sehr billigen Preisen abgeben können.

Offeriren prima Originalwalzen in allen Sprachen!

Prospecte gratis und franko!

Höchste Preise und Auszeichnungen auf dem Berliner Phonographischen Wettstreite.

NB. Wir haben dieses mal auf der Leipziger Messe nicht ausgestellt!



## GREAT MINDS THINK ALIKE

by David Trigg

Further to George Taylor's article 'Recording by Photography' in the February issue, during the late 1890s Joseph T. Tykociner had the idea of taking a manometric flame and photographing on a moving film strip the fluctuations caused by the impingement of sound waves on a diaphragm. His plan was to run this film record, after processing, through a mechanism incorporating a light source which would pass through the variable density of its photographed sound image to the then crude selenium cell. His belief was that if perfected it would provide an entirely new sound entertainment, better than the cylinder or disc record.

Who was this man Tykociner I hear you ask? Well, he was born in Poland in 1867, and as a boy chanced upon a French magazine describing in pictures the idea of the telephone. His older sister translated the article and the whole pattern of his future life was set. He worked for Telefunken in Berlin, and for Siemens and Halske in Russia. At the age of 18 he emigrated to America. The Edison phonograph aroused his interest, and he recognized a challenge to make a more accurate sound reproduction system. Some years later he returned to Poland where he finally began some formal scientific training. He became associated with the British Marconi company, and during World War One he headed the group supplying wireless equipment to the Russian Government. With the advent of the Bolshevik regime he escaped to his native Poland, and in 1920 he returned permanently to the United States. He became the first research professor of Electrical Engineering at the University of Illinois, and it was only natural that he was to show his interest in photographing sound waves. Development work proceeded rapidly, and he was able to give a public demonstration of his system in 1922 - it had taken Tykociner a quarter of a century to reach his goal. He used a carbon-grain telephone transmitter for a microphone, and an early Magnavox speaker with an upright horn for reproduction; the soundtrack was down the centre of the film. In this recording the Professor's voice announced, "This is an experiment in sound reproduction..." He counted to ten, then continued by shouting "Hello".

On subsequent recordings he placed the track on the side of the film opposite from that of modern practice. The materialisation of all this came far too late as others had brought similar sound on film processes to much higher stages of development. Lauste, Sponable, Lee de Forest and others had been interested in research leading to the goal of Talking Pictures. Joseph P. Tykociner was another of those pioneers in the gallery of the near-famous who worked on sound reproduction by using photography. Who was Tykociner? -- well, now you know!

As they say, 'Great Minds Think Alike', and in the world of sound reproduction, much thinking was done.....

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A Swiss correspondent is looking for a WEBER UNIKA ORCHESTRION. While this is hardly a talking machine, and it makes child's play of the storage problems encountered by collectors of console cabinet gramophones, it may be that a Member somewhere knows of a Unika tucked away in a cupboard and, if so, is invited to write to Kurt R.Meyer, Schlossergasse 19, 5620 Bremgarten, Switzerland.



LABORATORY  
EMILE BERLINER  
1458 COLUMBIA ROAD  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

*Matrix making from a  
zinc Etching. Solved after  
a great many failures*

The above is the title page of a set of manuscript notes by Emile Berliner on the subject of matrix making, dated November 21 1897. It was sent to us by Raymond Wile.

The zinc record is mounted on a tablet of hard Rubber with a thin sheet of Gutta Percha with moderate heat and pressure. Connection by wire having been made previously the zinc is cleaned with strong alcohol, lye and whiting, carefully rinsed, and brushed with soft brush. It is then suspended for 10-15 seconds in a moderately strong cyanide of potash in water solution and a current of about amperes using the zinc record as anode and a piece of carbon as cathode. It is then put into a bath prepared as follows.

#### Cyanide of copper bath

Dissolve 8oz. of best cyanide of potash per gallon of water. To a saturated solution of sulphate of copper add enough concentrated ammonia to barely re-dissolve the ammoniac of copper. Add enough of this copper mixture to the cyanide solution -- stirring constantly -- until a light amethyst color is obtained. Add this to either cyanide of silver or gold or both just enough to enoble the solution or more at pleasure.

Into this bath immerse the zinc disc after use of soft brush using a carbon hard retort and silver anode and a current of about amperes. Leave 5 minutes, brush with whiting and nickel in ordinary nickelbath using at least 5 volts tension. Leave in nickel-bath about 5 minutes. Take out, brush strongly with whiting, screw around disc a hard rubber flat ring and put in sulphate of copper depositing tank (current on) of about 18° density.

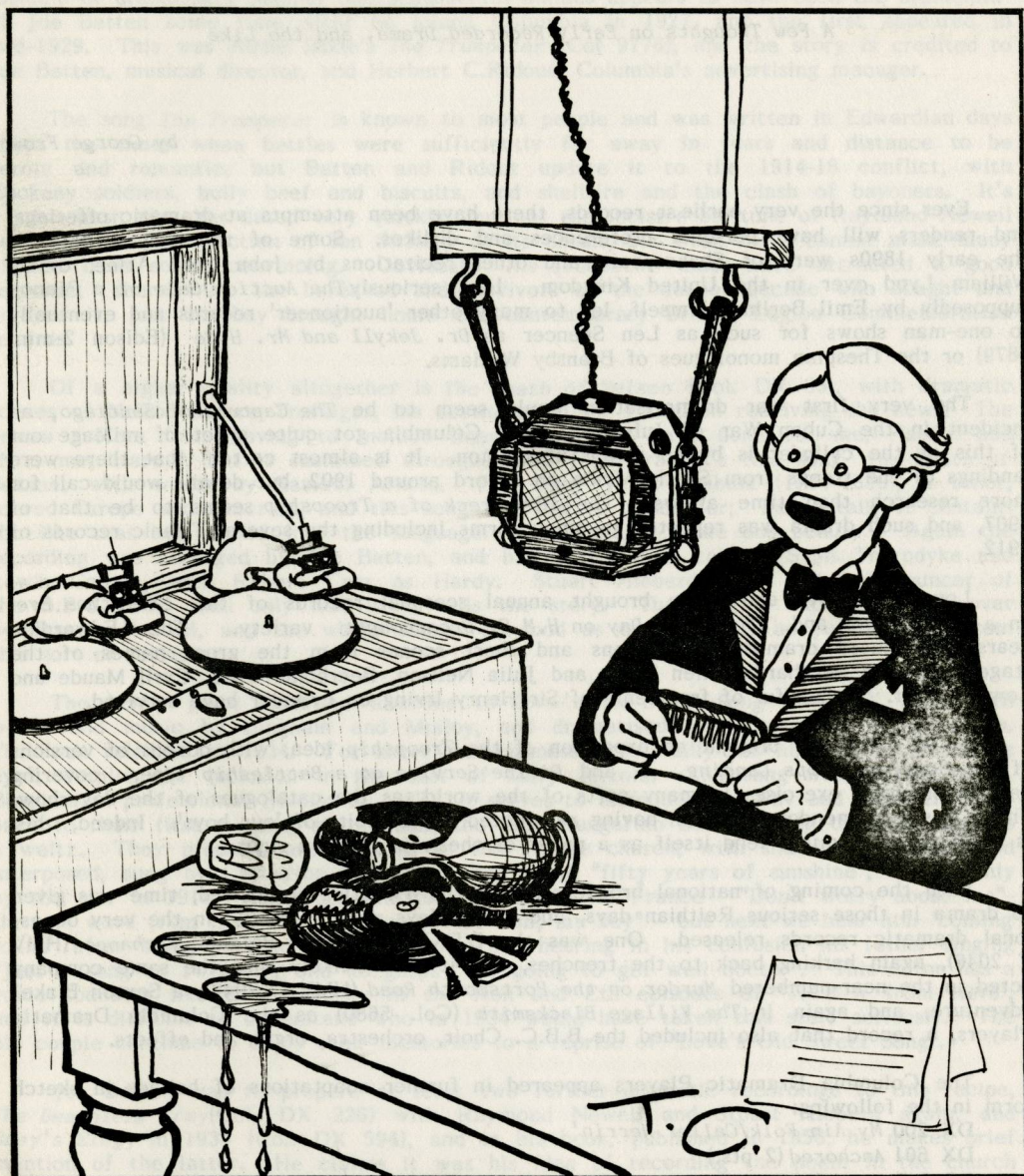
Deposit from 5 to 7 days (and nights) using about 4 amperes and about  $\frac{3}{4}$  volt per tank with constant agitating device.

When thick enough detach, turn off edge and back to standard size and etch zinc off from the copper deposit, then nickel in ordinary manner.

The cyanide copper bath after being freshly made contains free ammonia gas which should be nearly gotten out by continued stirring!

(The number of Amperes required in the 1st and 3rd paragraphs is left blank in the original ms.)





Instead you will hear an impromptu version of the  
Symphony, freely adapted for solo comb-and-paper



# Record Players

## *A Few Thoughts on Early Recorded Drama, and the Like*

by George Frow

Ever since the very earliest records, there have been attempts at dramatic offerings, and readers will have personal preferences and dislikes. Some of the very first from the early 1890s were of Shakespeare and other recitations by John York Atlee, or by William Lynd over in the United Kingdom. Less seriously *The Auction Sale of a Piano*, supposedly by Emil Berliner himself, led to many other 'auctioneer' records and eventually to one-man shows for such as Len Spencer as *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (Edison 2-min. 8879) or the Thespian monologues of Bransby Williams.

The very first war dramatisation would seem to be *The Capture of Santiago*, an incident in the Cuban War of July 1898, and Columbia got quite a lot of mileage out of this as the cylinder is by no means uncommon. It is almost certain that there were landings of the troops from South Africa on record around 1902, but details would call for more research than time allows. The first *Wreck of a Troopship* seems to be that of 1907, and such drama was repeated in many forms including the several Titanic records of 1912.

Love of hearth and home brought annual seasonal records of the *Christmas Eve in a Mining Camp* and *Christmas Day on H.M.S. Dreadnought* variety. The Edwardian years contributed dramatic recitations and short scenes from the great names of the stage, including Bernhardt, Ellen Terry and Julia Neilson, Beerbohm Tree, Cyril Maude and Lewis Waller. A handful of fragments of Sir Henry Irving on cylinder have survived.

In 1914 the war brought an expansion of the *Troopship* idea, with dozens of versions of *The British Troops Landing....* and *Divine Service on a Battleship* type, covering various patriotic exercises in many parts of the world, as the catalogues of the day show. There was a tremendous pride in having re-created the exploits of 'our boys'. Indeed, this is a subject that might lend itself as a paper or thesis in its own right.

With the coming of national broadcasting as the Twenties progressed, time was given to drama in those serious Reithian days, and these plays were reflected in the very occasional dramatic records released. One was the B.B.C. Players in *Brigade Exchange* (HMV C 2046), again harking back to the trenches, and it seems likely that the same company acted in the near-numbered *Murder on the Portsmouth Road* (HMV C 2044), a Sexton Blake adventure, and again in *The Village Blacksmith* (Col. 5680) as the Columbia Dramatic Players, a record that also included the B.B.C. Choir, orchestra, organ and effects.

The Columbia Dramatic Players appeared in further adaptations of ballads in sketch form in the following:

DX 200 *My Ain Folk/Caller Herrin'*

DX 601 *Anchored* (2 pts.)

DB 947 *Miner's Dream of Home* (with Raymond Newell, 2 pts.)

DB 954 *Old Jim's Christmas Hymn* (as the Columbia Sketch Company, 2 pts.)



Not having seen, let alone heard, any of these, I am unable to comment, but this formula of dramatising popular and sentimental ballads appears to have been the brainchild of Joe Batten some time after he joined Columbia in 1927, and the first appeared in mid-1929. This was Airlie Dixie's *The Trumpeter* (Col 9776), and the story is credited to Joe Batten, musical director, and Herbert C. Ridout, Columbia's advertising manager.

The song *The Trumpeter* is known to most people and was written in Edwardian days about the times when battles were sufficiently far away in years and distance to be heroic and romantic, but Batten and Ridout update it to the 1914-18 conflict, with Cockney soldiers, bully beef and biscuits, and shellfire and the clash of bayonets. It's a mish-mash that has dated very quickly, but has the incisive baritone of Raymond Newell and the first-class diction of Ion Swinley to its credit, but even these cannot make many of the lines sound convincing. Obviously *The Trumpeter* must have attracted a good response; there were the bereaved and survivors of the earlier decade who bought and enjoyed it, just as they brought home the contemporary British Legion Commemoration records.

Of a higher quality altogether is *The Death of Nelson* (Col. DX 85), with dramatic scenes of Nelson before Trafalgar, his death, and Lady Hamilton receiving the news. The drama suffers from having to include lines like "They have done for me, Hardy" and "Kiss me, Hardy", but is sustained throughout by John Braham's fine song *The Death of Nelson*, with words by Samuel Arnold. For many years Braham (1774-1856), a tenor, toured Europe and America, and this song was always called for; incidentally it contains the line that has passed into the language: "For England, home and beauty". Again the recording was arranged by Joe Batten, and has a first-rate cast in Sybil Thorndyke and Lewis Casson, with Robert Carr as Hardy. Stuart Hibberd, then Chief Announcer of the B.B.C., who died only last year, tells the story. The song is excellently put over by Francis Russell, and the whole sounds as good as can probably be put together from this sort of formula.

The booby prize must be awarded to *Love's Old Sweet Song* (Col. DX 597), with words and music by Bingham and Molloy, and dramatised by Batten and Ridout again. This was released in 1934. For sheer mawkishness it is really "as high as an elephant's eye", despite the inclusion in the cast of Mary Jerrold. The song was written by J. Bingham, a professional lyricist in 1882. It serves to introduce a Darby and Joan, thinking back to their first meeting at the ball, the Blue Hungarian Band playing the title tune as a waltz. They propose, are married in the village church, with snatches of the ballad interposed, sung by Catherine Stewart. They enjoy "fifty years of sunshine", broken only by the war in 1914. Their son enlists and departs for France - "Don't worry about me" - then no word from him - "If only I could see him, my boy" - but next we hear him 'coming round' after being patched up for wounds, and hearing in his confusion his father singing "Just a song at twilight", and he gasps "I'm going to get well doctor". This actor has a voice sounding like Dick Bentley in the Ron and Eth episodes of 'Take it from Here', and it is difficult to understand who in 1934 would have taken this stuff seriously. The old couple continue to enjoy their memories to a reprise of "Love's Old Sweet Song".

Joe Batten was to prepare at least two further dramatic recordings to this recipe, *The Deathless Army* (Col. DX 226) with Raymond Newell and Stuart Hibberd again, and *Gray's Elegy* in 1934 (Col. DX 594), and in his book, published in 1956, he makes brief mention of the latter. He claims it was his idea of recording the poem in the church and churchyard at Stoke Poges, where it was written and Gray is buried. "The same bell tolled curfew, birds sang impromptu and unrehearsed sound effects, whilst the microphone placed at the head of Gray's tomb transmitted to the recording van the beautiful voice of my friend Ion Swinley reciting the 'Elegy', to whom must go the credit of the successful result. We lost one of our finest actors when he died". Also in Joe Batten's



Book is a photograph taken in the churchyard showing Batten himself, Swinley and the Rector and other church officials. As would be expected at that date everyone was correctly dressed in suits for the occasion, with the Technical Chief W.S.Purser affecting a wing collar. One can only wonder how many recording engineers wear these today!

Joe Batten's influence showed itself again on Columbia's cheaper label, and its successor Regal-Zonophone. Two real Victorian melodramas were recorded by Tod Slaughter and his company; the first was *Maria Marten, or the Murder in the Red Barn* (MR 611-2) followed by *Sweeney Todd, the Demon Barber of Fleet Street* (MR 716-7), and both were issued in 1932. Slaughter (1885-1955) - that was his real name - toured for years with a company putting on Victorian melodrama at practically every theatre and music hall throughout the kingdom, often performing a different play each night, and although much cut, these two plays are relics of the high dramatic style popular in the early Victorian days. Others in Slaughter's repertory were *East Lynne* ("Dead!" and .... never called me Mother"), *The Face at the Window* and *Lady Audley's Secret* from Dorothy Braddon's novel.

It is this last that is represented on Regal-Zonophone MR2239-40. Again Joe Batten chose Ion Swinley to lead the cast, with Lydia Sherwood in the title part, supported by Norman Shelley and a young Leo Gunn, who became a leading figure ten years later in British films.

There were quite a number of other dramatic records, some on minor labels; it is not possible within a short article to detail them all, and what should or should not come within the category is difficult to define. Several sources of spoken records existed outside the domestic catalogues; these have slender claim to be of a dramatic nature, but deserve at least a passing glance.

The series of 100 Lectures published by Columbia for The International Educational Society were given mainly by philosophers, scientists and savants, but one or two dealt with dramatists and novelists. For instance, Lecture 4 was a Shakespeare recital by Sir Johnson Forbes-Robertson; Lecture 41 was a talk on George Eliot and Lecture 81 on Jane Austen, both experts at creating dramatic situations.

Even more obscure were - and are - the recordings put out by the Language Teaching Companies. The playlets in this category were everyday stories of (foreign) country folk, and some might see drama in "Madame Dubois au Marche". More interesting though were the elusive Linguaphone records by George Bernard Shaw, no mean dramatist of his time. It is a pity vintage catalogues from such companies do not appear on the market as readily as those of entertainment records.

A neglected series were the Talking Books for the Blind. It is thought that none of these featured drama involving a cast of more than one, and like the Language Records, no catalogue has been seen. In fact the 24 r.p.m. records and the machines to play them were restricted to blind people and were returnable on their relinquishment or death to Talking Books for the Blind; hence they are not found very often. All records seen have been readings of novels by radio announcers or actors. Later, l.p. at 16 $\frac{2}{3}$  r.p.m. replaced the 24 r.p.m. shellac discs, and probably nowadays cassettes are the only form sent out.

While making no claim to be anywhere near comprehensive, this article aspires to lean readers' thoughts towards the potted adventure available on the 3-4 minute record. In the first few years of l.p., recorded stage plays were a feature of the catalogue. Argo's complete Shakespeare plays, *The Death of a Salesman*, *The Ghost Train*, *Lost*



horizon, *Under Milkwood*, Wilde, Chekhov, Moliere, and more besides, all made the 78 extracts from *Private Lives*, *Murder in the Cathedral* and *The Importance of Being Earnest* of earlier decades look rather mean, and Troopship adventures positively primitive. But then they were primitive, and they appealed to a generation who lived with a greater simplicity of thought and manners. Perhaps that's one of the reasons for the interest in such records today and the prompt response when offered for sale.

Dear Mr. Proudfoot,

Well, my article on the English Columbia matrix series (Hillandale 133) seems to have excited some comment, not all of it favourable. I must apologise to Tim Brooks, who is upset that I did not consult the sources he referred to in his original letter to Hillandale 118; I tried various libraries, including the British Library, without success, but did not take the step of writing to the States for copies of the actual magazine. I sincerely hope that Mr. Brooks will act on your suggestion of submitting an article, if only on the matrix series of most interest to British collectors - or would it be possible to reprint the RECORD RESEARCH material in a future issue (or two, or three) of HILL-ANDALE? That would help fill up your pages! On the difficulty of obtaining magazines of interest to record collectors, this was brought home to me yet again recently when I failed to find a library which takes our own THE RECORD COLLECTOR.

I was interested in George Frow's comments on Vitaphone in his *People, Paper and Things*. We have corresponded briefly on the history of Vitaphone and I am preparing an article concentrating on the short films and technical background. I should much appreciate a list of titles and dates of issue of the shorts. Contrary to the suggestion made in various books, I have failed (I think) to reconstruct such a list from the reviews in VARIETY magazine in 1927 and 1928 at least (the University College of Los Angeles, where I beavered away for a couple of days at Easter, had a gap in their files for 1929 - yet another indication of difficulty in consulting primary sources.) I can't help feeling that this subject must have been researched before, but I can find no detailed references.

Yours sincerely, George Taylor

Dear Editor,

Re-reading issues 132 and 133 I came across the Peter Adamson and Frank James exchange on special cinema records. No doubt there are many more about than the comments suggest but in the event one has recently turned up in my possession. It is:

YBX 15    Dance of the Dwarfs - Grieg/Polish Dance No. 1 - Scharwenka  
          BBC Military Band (Conductor B.Walton O'Donnell)  
          14862 WAX D70

          Three Dances from Henry VIII (E.German)  
          Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra (Conductor Sir Dan Godfrey)  
          14866 WAX D68

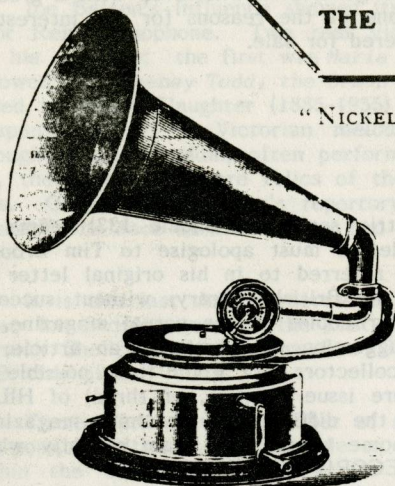
The label is as described by Frank James apart from the addition of a Mecolico copyright medallion at the bottom.

Yours Sincerely, James E. Friend



# JOHN G. MURDOCH & Co., LTD.

## THE NICKEL KING No. 1.



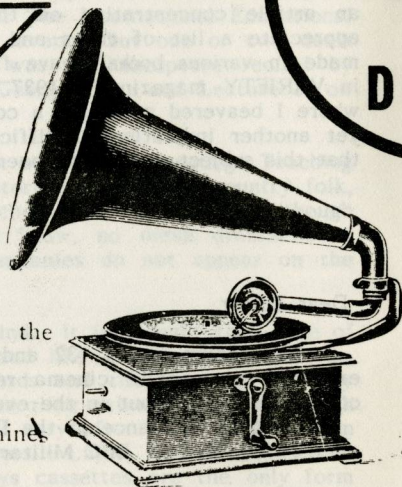
"NICKEL KINGS" will be in big demand this season. Quality is high. Price is low. The "NICKEL KING" No. 1. has astounded those who have seen it—it is such excellent value. It has the Tournaphone Sound Box, and is mounted on nickel circular case, and fitted to black wooden base.  $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch silent motor; 7-inch turntable; 16-inch x 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch round bell horn. Will sell at sight.

Complete List of Talking Machines contains full illustrated description.

## THE ANGELUS.

There is no need to pay a high price for a smart and reliable machine. The "ANGELUS" proves this. It is a "cheap" machine in price but not in quality. The reproduction is sweet and clear, and blasts and overtones hitherto found in machines at a low price are entirely absent. You cannot afford to miss the "ANGELUS."

Complete List of Cylinder and Disc Machine contains illustrated description.



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WHOLESALE ONLY.



# JOHN G. MURDOCH & Co., LTD.

## THE NICKEL KING No. 2.

The No. 2. "NICKEL KING" is very similar to No. 1, but is fitted with a charming Flower Horn, beautiful red colour, size 19½-inches x 15½-inches. The sale of these machines will make life-long customers for the retailer. The silent running motor is a feature of "NICKEL KINGS," which play nearly two 10-inch Records at one winding.

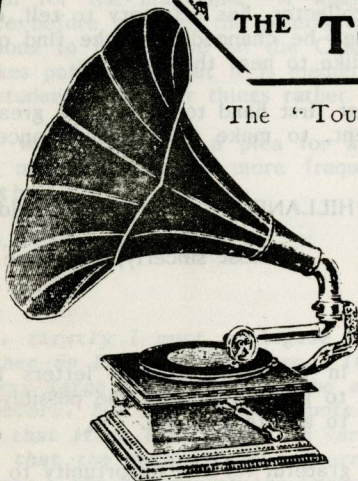
For price and description see illustrated list of Cylinder and Disc Talking Machines, free.



All Up-to-Date  
Dealers stock  
them.

OOD  
4  
SCS.

We supply the  
Trade only, but  
we send the  
name of near-  
est dealer to  
any enquirer.  
Do not be put  
off with "Some-  
thing as good"  
there are none  
so good.



## THE Tournaphone "K"

The "TOURNAPHONE K" is a Model de Luxe. You can buy no better Disc Machine, although you may spend more money. It has the 1906-7 Tournaphone Sound Box, and 10-inch turntable. The silent motor plays two 10-inch or three 7-inch Records at one winding. Fitted with attractive Flower Horn, 26½-inches x 22¼-inches.

See the astounding low price and description in general Phono Catalogue, free.

# UNIVERSAL TALKING MACHINE PROVIDERS.

WHOLESALE ONLY.



Dear Mr. Proudfoot,

Geroge Frow's 10-inch Berliner of John W. Morton "On Mutton Pies" has matrix no. 1053 (in the b series) and was recorded in November 1901. Can anyone tell me the matrix numbers of the 7-inch 1139 (or 1139X or 1139Z) "On Different Kinds of Love" and of 1145 "On Seaside Talks"?

Sheffield

Yours, Alan Kelly

Dear Mr. Proudfoot,

As a novice collector I have found that COLLECTING PHONOGRAPHS AND GRAMOPHONES is an absorbing book to own. It is beautifully produced and has proven invaluable to me; I like to assume that you are as happy with it as I am.

Regrettably, I find that the HILLANDALE NEWS, on the other hand, is distinctly not aimed, as your book is, at the interests of the beginning collector. On the contrary it contains articles dealing, for example, with the intricate complexities of Mr. Berliner's arcane numbering system, articles which the highly sophisticated, long-term collector would warm to. But for my part I cannot.

I dislike to carp, however, without offering suggestions for change: should you ever wish to alter your editorial policy to include a wider readership, there are, I'm certain, some absorbing stories out there waiting to be written. I refer to profile articles on the great collectors - those of machines and those of recordings. Who are they? How did they become collectors? What are some of their most prized items? How did they find them? Every collector, yes, every collector, has his story to tell, especially the story of divine serendipity: that moment when he chanced upon the find of finds - and had the wisdom to know it. I for one, would like to hear these stories.

It is most unlikely that I shall be introduced at first hand to any of the great British collectors, but it would be gratifying, in any event, to make their acquaintance through the pages of your magazine.

Please understand that I shall not give up on HILLANDALE, only that I could wish it was for me a little more appealing.

West Newton, Massachusetts.

Most sincerely, Lawrence Goodwin

Dear Mr. Proudfoot,

I suppose you may already be floundering in a mound of 600 letters from the membership who doubtless have rushed to put pen to paper following the possibly rash invitation in your last editorial. But here is another to add to the pile.

I have nothing very profound to offer but am grateful for the opportunity to say how much I value my membership of the C.P.G.S. and enjoy the Hillandale. It is delightful; a constant source of information, amusement and enjoyment and the only paper I can honestly claim to read from cover to cover. Thus I do notice when it is late. Realising that the significant task of producing each issue falls on a handful of people with other, possibly excessive, demands on their time I would not dream of complaining. But until recently I was aware that the journal was reaching me even later because of a small but significant and persistent error in the Society's record of my address. The difference



between Deptford and Plumstead may not be much in miles but it is enough to confound the postal service for weeks. I therefore pointed out the error to the Secretary and cannot avoid the niggling suspicion that I am the member referred to in his Snippets column in the April issue. I hope I am wrong (I am sure you are - Ed.) for, as I recall, the letter was a mere three-liner pointing out that I live in SE18 not SE8. It didn't apportion praise or blame; it didn't criticize or offer sympathy. None of these things seemed called for. But if it gave offence I apologise and can only say that none was intended.

This leads me to comment on the passive nature of my membership of the Society. I seldom get to the London meetings, never to others and contribute little beyond my subscription. As such, I am probably representative of a majority of members and am conscious that the tiny minority who make the Society work must sometimes wonder why they bother. If so, I can only say that in all associations 'twas ever thus, and doubtless always will be. The compensation must surely be the occasions such as this when a passive member stirs himself to offer a small thank you and the knowledge that without members like me there really wouldn't be any point in your labours. I hope this is a crumb of comfort.

The energies and enthusiasms which we all possess are diffuse and we cannot devote as much time to all our interests as we would wish. In my own case this means that an undoubted enthusiasm for early recorded sound in all its forms is not (yet) matched by any particular expertise in the subject. This prompts a final comment, if I may, which is that the high standards of the Society and the respect which it rightly commands can be a little awe-inspiring to the novice. This may lead to a disinclination to ask questions or impart discoveries of intense personal interest for fear that they will be dismissed as elementary, misguided or whatever. Perhaps this explains the current shortage of material for the magazine. It would not surprise me, for example, Mr. Taylor to think twice before offering the results of any further researches he may undertake, given the reactions to his article on the Columbia matrix system. By all means let us have our mistakes pointed out but it is elementary psychology to do so in a way which encourages the student to greater things rather than putting him off the subject for life.

So I would end with a plea for a little more tolerance and understanding. Given that, you might find me a more frequent correspondent, welcome or otherwise though that **might** be.

Plumstead, SE18.

Yours sincerely, R. Carlisle

*Well, firstly I must apologise for the juxtaposition of Mr. Goodwin's letter with another on Berliner matrices. It was a temptation too strong to resist. Not that a very large proportion of the magazine's space has been allotted to Berliner matrix numbers, but Mr. Goodwin quotes the subject as typical of our content, and I suggest that it is typical of the varied interests of our members. It is sometimes forgotten that the material in a journal such as ours reflects the interests of its contributors - the Members of the Society.*

*Mr. Goodwin clearly supposes that the magazine's content depends on Editorial policy, and while Mr. Carlisle offers some most welcome encouragement, he also seems to imply a similar assumption. While I cannot deny that the Editor inevitably has some influence on the magazine, I can say that only to a very limited extent does he*



have the luxury of choice.

I suspect that my ideal in producing the magazine is not so far from what our two correspondents seem to suggest. I try to provide a mixture of light and heavy reading, of record and machine interest. We are not a commercial magazine chasing annual circulation figures; rather, the magazine is a sort of continuing part-work, a build-up of information for collectors covering many years. Most back numbers continue to be available long after publication, and therefore I prefer to avoid covering the same subject more than once unless there is important extra information to be presented. This is one reason why it is difficult to include very much material for beginners: most of it can be found in the last twenty-four years of HILLANDALE or perhaps more conveniently in that book that Mr. Goodwin was kind enough to mention, and which is obtainable from the Secretary. That is not to say, however, that I would necessarily reject an article aimed at the novice if such an article were submitted - in fact, there is very little that I actually reject outright. Equally, consideration would be given to articles of the 'personal recollection' type that may be submitted; such articles have appeared in the past and have often made good reading.

However, I would not like to let the cult of personalities overtake the more useful role of HILLANDALE in bringing information to collectors and historians. That should always be its main purpose. The reference to the 'Great Collectors' I find quite amusing; this conjures up visions of minor J. Paul Gettys strutting proudly through their gramophone museums and record libraries. Come come, most of the members of this Society, be they old hands or novices, are just ordinary, if eccentric, people, living in ordinary houses and for ever trying to cope with the problem of fitting more pieces of obsolete equipment and more boxes of old records into houses that were designed to contain families and their essential furniture and no more. If anyone wants to be written up in a profile, and if anyone else wants to write such a profile, by all means have a go, but I fancy there may be few takers. On the whole, we are a modest lot. Ed.

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|       |                                                   |
|-------|---------------------------------------------------|
| A   R | <b>association for recorded sound collections</b> |
| S   C |                                                   |

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ANNUAL CONFERENCE APRIL 1984

The Association for Recorded Sound Collections is a non-profit, scholarly organization founded in 1966, and has a current membership of about 900. It brings together private collectors and representatives from the world's largest public record archives, and encompasses all fields of music from classical to rock.

The 1984 conference was hosted by the Sound Recordings Archives at Bowling Green State University, which specialises in the study of American popular culture. Among the subjects discussed this year were the recordings of Arturo Toscanini, Leopold Stokowski Duke Ellington, the Ziegfeld Follies and early minstrel shows, "Cats in Music", Jewish records, the first Columbia disc records (1901), recordings of Shakespeare, the automation of public record archives, a presentation of jazz and popular musical film shorts of the 1940s and a talk on counter-tenors from our own Joe Pengelly. There was also an unveiling of the first part (covering 78 rpm records) of the Association's catalogue of all the records in the world's principal collections. The listing is known as the Rigler & Deutsch Record Index, after the philanthropists who provided principal funding.



## STRAIGHTENING THE RECORD....

Dear Mr. Proudfoot,

I was interested in Ted Cunningham's amusing item on flattening records in the April issue, particularly as I used to indulge in the practice of making flowerpots from battered 78s. It was a favourite occupation with some children in the 1930s; we would make the pots in Autumn and plant them with hyacinth bulbs for Christmas flowering.

Ted's plate glass method is a sound one which I have used for years. The edges of mine are bound with tape rather than filed. Eye protection would be essential if a file were employed. Use of the airing cupboard had not occurred to me and I shall certainly try it - when ours is not crammed to capacity. My habit has been to wait for a sunny day and position the 'sandwich' on a table near the window.

One modification I would suggest is that the record should be placed on one piece of glass and the top piece not added until all three components have been allowed to warm thoroughly. Some early trials I made before doing so resulted in cracked records.

Add weights subsequently by all means, although I have not found this necessary. I can certainly bear out Ted's comment on the use of an oven, no matter how low the setting; a beautiful mirror-finish is obtained, even though the record is totally unplayable.

Jim Goodall's article on George Overstall's gramophone was also of great interest as I have been privileged to hear the machine in action. I can confirm Jim's high opinion; the sound quality is at least the equal of any acoustic machine I have heard and is superior to many - not excluding the E.M.G.s.

Sincerely,

Lawrie Wilson

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Blackpool, Lancs.

Dear Editor,

Thank you so very much for a great newsletter. I look forward to reading it, and find it interesting, and sometimes so humorous - by the serious replies you get. You too must have your little toung-in-the-mouth cheek movements I guess.

It's sad there isn't a North-West branch now. However, I struggle on, trying to obtain new members still, and I have brought two or three into the fold since opening my small shop here. Recently I have been involved with Barry Williamson at Liverpool, in his latest creation, the new Concert sound head. I did the pilot drawings, and I must say I congratulate him on a lovely reproduction. It's a credit to him, and I must say I have made a good friend. I think we should all raise our hats to him; he plods on, turning out all the spare parts he can muster.

In a short while I am hoping to extend the business, to include a museum and display and will let you know when this is completed. Meanwhile, I'm burning the midnight oil again, while things are quiet in the house, so for now Thank you again for HILLDALE and flower pot 78s.



## LONDON MEETINGS

February 1984

Once again we welcomed Ted Cunningham to provide the evening's entertainment. The title chosen was "Something in the Air", and chiefly covered the Players' Theatre and the many famous names that have appeared there.

The opening number in traditional style was Charles Shadwell & his Orchestra playing a march, "Down the Mall", and this was followed by many entertainers and music associated with the theatre. Among these were Harry Fay (Kitty, isn't it a Pity?), Dennis Martin (Trotting to the Fair), Bernard Miles, Joan Sterndale-Bennett, Stanley Holloway and Dan Leno, to name but a few.

After the interval more well-known artists were presented, such as Vesta Victoria (Now I have to Call him Father), George Grossmith & Haydee de Rance, Vivian Ellis, Binnie Hale, Dora Bryan and Peter Ustinov. One record played had the appropriate title "Something in the Atmosphere" from a show called "Tina" by Paul Rubens. This recording (HMV) featured Rubens himself, and is thought to be the only record he made.

The evening ended with a song often heard at The Players, My Old Dutch (the Albert Chevalier recording) and finished in fine style with Charles Shadwell's orchestra playing "Down with the Curtain".

March 1984

The evening's entertainment was provided by Stuart Upton, Secretary of the Vintage Light Music Society. This society aims to foster interest in light music of a bygone era, mainly the 1920s and 1930s.

Some of the older members of our Society would have remembered many of the names from hearing them on the 'wireless' in those days. Among those heard were Edith Lorand and her Viennese Orchestra, Herman Finck and his Orchestra, Ambrose, Geraldo, The London Palladium Orchestra under Jack Frere, and Joe Venuti's Rhythm Boys.

After the interval we heard some composers' recordings, among which were Sir Alexander Mackenzie (the Little Minister Overture), Herman Finck (Dream Girl Intermezzo) Sir Edward German (The Conqueror, Entrance and Dance of the Children), the J.H.Squire Celeste Octet (Moonbeams & Shadows), and among other familiar names which featured were Irving Berlin (Vocal Gems from The Coconuts), Rodgers (Peggy Ann, Selections) and a miniature revue "How do you do?" by Harold Simpson.

Our thanks to both Ted and Stuart for all the work that they put into the preparation of these programmes, both of which were linked together with interesting comments and anecdotes.

London Reporter.

\*\*There is no REGIONAL ROUNDUP in this issue, owing to Mike Field's absence in the United States.



# Review

## 78 REVOLUTIONS

A PLAY BY MICHAEL WILCOX

*Reviewed by Peter Adamson*

When I heard that there was to be a play about the pioneering days of recording, to be shown at the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith, I wondered sadly whether I would get down South to see it while it was on (June 12th - July 14th). So I was surprised and delighted to find that '78 Revolutions' was in fact being premiered in Edinburgh at the Traverse Theatre, and what was more, the play was set in St. Petersburg in 1901, a situation of much interest to me.

Having read about Gaisberg's recording tours, seen photographs from his album, and acquired a fair number of the early Berliner discs, I was impressed by the way the play reflected the atmosphere I had always imagined. More than that, there was so much detail to note (and generally to approve): there was a mock-up of a recording machine, with a real electric motor whirring away - gravity drive was not then in use, but its possibilities were discussed in the play. A real tenor and a real soprano sang real arias into the horn, accompanied by one of the two young Americans on a believably well-used piano (nearly in tune).

During the play, the problems of the two-minute recording time limit were encountered and the alternatives of slower speed and the imminent 10-inch discs were discussed. The scene was set on a large circular black floor with a circular red carpet in the centre. Special praise must go to the designer, Dermot Hayes, for doing some difficult homework!

The dramatic elements - even melodrama - were provided by occasional tension between the two young engineers (only slightly modelled on Gaisberg and Sinkler Darby), and by the wily Russians' bribery and the singers' temperamental tantrums - which were both effective and believable.

A little permissible artistic licence was in evidence: the recording machine and piano were on really rather nice 'brass' stands instead of rough wooden crate constructions; the playing of an Ellen Beach Yaw record on a 'Trade Mark' gramophone was understandably simulated from a tape recording. The changeover from the etched process, shown in reasonable simulation, to the new wax process, was highlighted in conjunction with the imminence of the 10-inch disc and the recording of the top artists of the Imperial opera, whereas these were really spread over two tours in 1900 and 1901. These ideas were of course the 'revolutions' of the play's title; a nice touch was the sprinkling of very subtle hints of a future real political conflict.

The two engineers (Chip and Alan) were played with a subtle mixture of cleverness and youthful enthusiasm by Norman Cooley and Neal Swettenham, and the slippery agent Alexi by Philip Voss; the opera singers were Gordon Faith and Lee Trevorow, as Grigory Paovnar and Griselda Grazzione. Apart from several passages of genuine Russian and liberal mention of such names as Labinsky, Figner, Maxakov etc., we were treated to:



*Mi par d'udir (The Pearl Fishers)*  
*Ah, non credea mirarti (La Sonnambula)*  
*Ave Maria (Otello)*  
*Brindisi (Lucrezia Bori)*

The last of these made a splendid finale.

If you have any interest in early recording days, you should go along and experience the strange, novel, claustrophobic technical miracle which was the young Gramophone in its heady days of fighting to the top of the musical tree. If you have read Gaisberg's book, or have any of the early records, you will find the portrayal a delight. On a final note: in conversation with the producer, Peter Lichtenfels, after the play, I was told that the cast had all read Gaisberg's book.....

### GRAMSTOP

Dear Mr. Proudfoot,

We recently purchased a gramophone in a circular Sheraton-style mahogany cabinet. Inside the lid is a gilt transfer three inches square advertising the 'Gramstop'. It illustrates a cam close to the turntable edge connected to a cone-shaped projection in the path of the tone-arm. Sadly, our motor-board now bears little trace of the original device.

Could you kindly tell us a little more about this invention? when was it first marketed and did it achieve any degree of success?

The label states 'Manufactured by the Automatic Gramophone Stop Syndicate Ltd. Office & Works - Retford, Notts. Registered Trade Mark Patents 14002/14 28048/19.

Yours sincerely, Harold Lapworth.

My information on the Gramstop is somewhat limited. It was advertised in 'Sound Wave' in July 1920 and, according to a report in the August issue, there was a 'huge response'. The General Manager of the Automatic Gramophone Stop Syndicate Ltd. was one John Rodway, and there was a London office at 25, Victoria Street. Advertisements continued to appear in 1920, and a clip-on record brush for the soundbox was also marketed. This cost 2/3d. The Gramstop itself was 5/9d. I have no note of any advertisement after January 1921, though that is not to say that there were none.

I have not been able to trace the two 'Patent' numbers; they are not actual Patent numbers for either 1914 or 1919, and are presumably Patent Application or Provisional numbers, which do not appear in the Patent Abridgement Specifications which I have. I doubt whether the Gramstop ever achieved much commercial success, for I cannot recall ever having seen one, and indeed the same goes for the many other patent automatic stops that were invented over the acoustic gramophone period. In general, one finds only those fitted by manufacturers as original equipment.

Ed.



## OPERA SINGERS IN SILENT FILMS

by George Taylor

It may seem a contradiction to expect to find opera singers in the silent cinema. Nevertheless, many singers did star in silent films, because they were good looking, good actors or simply celebrities.

For some years I have been compiling a list of opera singers who appeared in silent films, together with the films themselves, where possible. Many, indeed most, of these singers also made gramophone records which will be familiar to collectors, so perhaps it is not out of place to have a short article on singers in the silent cinema in Hillandale. One of my objects in putting forward this article is to obtain from readers more information, either on films made by the singers named, or on further singers and their films - particularly, perhaps, on non-American singers and films.

A table of singers and their films is given at the end of this article. In the case of Michael Bohnen and Geraldine Farrar, who made many films, only the most relevant film (in my opinion) is named and the number of others indicated; I have all the titles, however. Details of the singers' careers can be found in sources such as Kutsch and Riemens, and the Record of Singing, Vols. 1 and 2.

In many cases, the opera singer appeared in a film on an opera (Bohnen, Cavalieri, Chaliapin, Farrar, Garden, Muratore) but not necessarily. For example, Caruso's films were both comedies, although the first involved Caruso in a double role, a barber and his cousin who was a famous tenor. (The film was a flop and his second picture was not released). Most of Bohnen's and Farrar's pictures had nothing to do with opera. Bohnen was a good actor and Farrar was not only a celebrity of the Metropolitan Opera but also good looking. Marguerite Namara allegedly appeared in a film with Rudolph Valentino - if so, it was either an early film of the 1918-1921 period (which is unlikely) or, if later, Namara had only a minor role. Lina Cavalieri, like Farrar, was a beautiful woman, but apparently her film making career was not all smooth sailing. Sam Goldwyn, in his 1923 book 'Behind the Screen', remarks "Nor was a rival's venture with the beautiful Lina Cavalieri more productive of confidence in the wisdom of transplanting the operatic star to the screen firmament". (The rival was Adolph Zukor of Paramount.) Goldwyn had just suffered financially from the failure of Mary Garden's film of 'Thais', though her second film was comparatively successful. His earlier appearance with Farrar had been more encouraging, however.

One of the most bizarre films was Destinn's 1913 German picture, where she sang an aria from 'Mignon' in a cage with a lion. It was stated that the moment Destinn started singing, the lion stopped roaring! The singer's fee for the short film was £2500, while her life was insured for £25000 at a premium of £1000, this being stipulated by Destinn in the contract. Why did she do it? She was inordinately fond of cats, and presumably the fee was appreciated.

(A list of Opera Singers and their silent films follows on the next page)



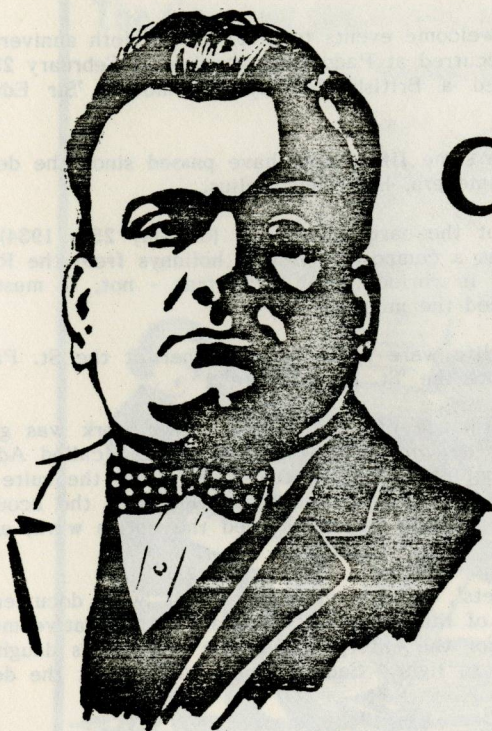
# Opera Singers and their Silent Films

| Singer                                      | Films                                                                                                        |
|---------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Michael Bohnen (1887-1965) bass             | <i>Der Rosenkavalier</i> (1920) and 8 others                                                                 |
| Anna Case (1889-?) soprano                  | ?(1915) and (1919)?                                                                                          |
| Enrico Caruso (1873-1921) tenor             | <i>My Cousin</i> (1918)<br><i>A Splendid Romance</i> (1918)                                                  |
| Lina Cavalieri (1874-1944) soprano          | <i>Manon Lescaut</i> (1914), <i>The Eternal Temptress</i> (1917), <i>The House of Granada</i> (1919) others? |
| Feodor Chaliapin (1873-1938) bass           | <i>The Maid of Pskov</i> (1915)                                                                              |
| Emmy Destinn (1878-1930) soprano            | <i>The Lion's Bride</i> (1913)                                                                               |
| Geraldine Farrar (1882-1967) soprano        | <i>Carmen</i> (1913) and 13 others                                                                           |
| Mary Garden (1874?-1967) soprano            | <i>Thais</i> (1917),<br><i>The Splendid Sinner</i> (1918)                                                    |
| Maria Kouznetsova (1880-1966) soprano       | ? (1920s?)                                                                                                   |
| Mary Lewis (1897-1941) soprano              | <i>The Ugly Duckling</i> (c. 1920) and more<br><i>Christie comedies</i>                                      |
| Lucien Muratore (1878-1954) tenor           | <i>Manon Lescaut</i> (1914),<br><i>The House of Granada</i> (1919)                                           |
| Marguerite Namara (1888-1977) soprano       | ? (after 1923?)                                                                                              |
| Dimitri Smirnov (1881-1944) tenor           | <i>Peter the Great</i> (?)                                                                                   |
| John Charles Thomas (1891-1960)<br>baritone | <i>Under the Red Robe</i> (1923)                                                                             |
| Vanni-Marcoux (1877-1962) bass-baritone     | ? (?)                                                                                                        |

As usual, additions, corrections and any other further information to add to the above list are invited. While on the subject of information sought, Mrs. I.G.Jennings of [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Queensland, Australia has written for anything we can tell her about a Columbia record which belonged to her father, whose family escaped from Russia when he was a child. It was listed in the 1931 catalogue as 02525, A RUSSIAN BARCAROLE by Mmes BIRSE and Mm. DEDOVITCHabd SHEVTCHENKO / ROUND THE HAY WAIN, CHAUVE-SOURIS COMPANY. The label is Columbia dark blue (which, of course, looks more like black). Exactly what information Mrs Jennings seeks is not made clear, apart from the value, which is not something the Society can advise on. - Ed.





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## HOLST AND DELIUS

Recently there have been some most welcome events to mark the fiftieth anniversary of Elgar's death. Not the least of these occurred at Paddington Station on February 25th. when the conductor Simon Rattle renamed a British Railways locomotive 'Sir Edward Elgar' in honour of the occasion.

However we must not forget that the same fifty years have passed since the deaths of two other prominent composers of the same era, Holst and Delius.

Holst, who died after a long illness at the early age of 59 (on May 25th 1934) did not find it easy to make his way in life as a composer. During holidays from the Royal College of Music he played the trombone in various local orchestras - not, it must be added, for enjoyment; he quite simply needed the money.

The happiest days of the composer's life were spent as a teacher at the St. Paul's Girls' School. During his time there he wrote the 'St. Paul's Suite'.

Only five years later the first performance of Holst's best known work was given at St. Paul's School: the 'Planets Suite'. The conductor was a young man called Adrian Boult. Gustave himself was first to conduct the seven pieces which form the suite for the gramophone, on Columbia, in 1921. However, he was not satisfied with the acoustic set and in the early days of the electrical process he re-recorded the entire work, again with the London Symphony Orchestra.

Unfortunately, apart from 'The Planets', Holst's music was not well documented on records during the 78 era. Indeed much of this composer's brilliant and inovative music would be lost to us on disc were it not for the enterprises of the composer's daughter, Imogen Holst, in bringing many fine pieces to light. Sadly, I must also report the death of Miss Holst, at the age of 76, in March.

The other composer with which we are concerned here was rather better served by the record companies than Holst during the pre-l.p. period.

Frederick Delius had a fair selection of songs, solo instrumental and shorter orchestral pieces in the record catalogues of the early 1930s. Later on the Delius Society was formed by Columbia with Sir Thomas Beecham as President and Sir Granville Bartock as Vice-President. Sir Thomas, who conducted all the performances in the series with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, said "I have no hesitation in declaring the life and works of Delius to be the greatest and most far-reaching incident in music during the last fifty years". Praise indeed for the son of a German wool merchant who went, from his father's Bradford home, to Florida (in 1884) to manage an orange plantation. This post was rapidly neglected in favour of studies with the local organist. It was Edward Grieg who finally persuaded Frederick's father that the future for his son lay in music, not oranges.

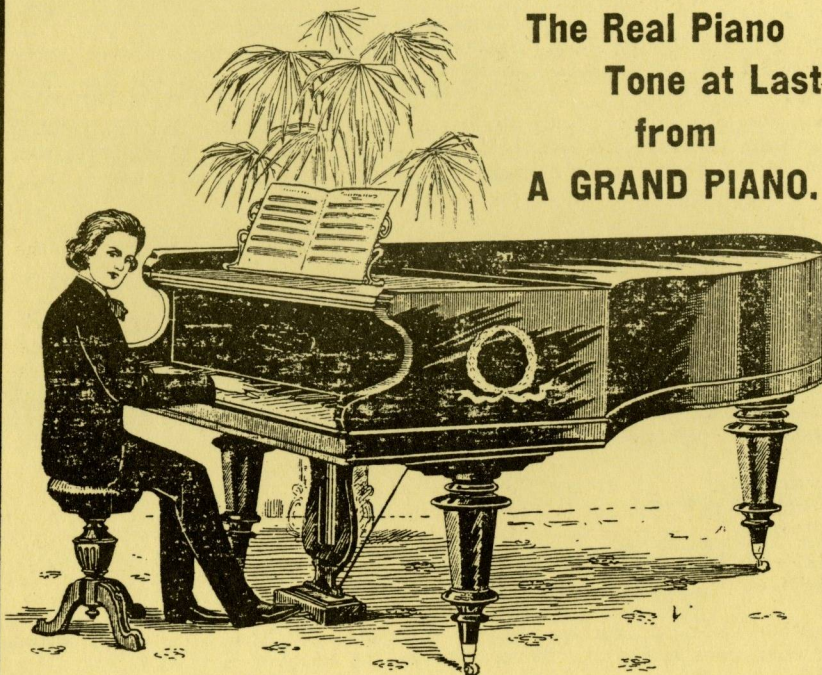
After attending a concert in 1907, which included Delius' piece 'Appalachia', Beecham became a great champion of the composers' music. Indeed it was Beecham's influence (and money) which helped introduce much of the Delius repertoire to British audiences. Sir Thomas it was who first put on the opera 'A Village Romeo and Juliet' at Covent Garden in 1910. Delius spent most of his life from 1897 until his death on June 10th 1934 in the village of Grez-sur-Loing, near Fontainebleau.

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